

**Amendments to the claims:**

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in this application.

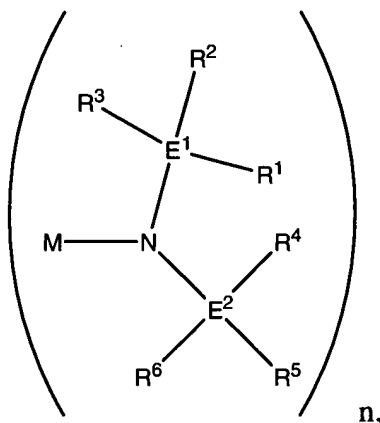
**Listing of claims:**

Claims 1-25. (Canceled)

Claim 26. (New) A composition for use in the formation of alkali metal-containing materials, comprising:

an alkali metal amide compound, said compound being a liquid at a temperature in the range of about 20°C to about 70°C and forming a vapor at a temperature of between about 150°C and 250°C.

Claim 27. (New) The composition as in claim 26, wherein the alkali metal amide has the formula



where M is an alkali metal; E¹ and E² may be the same or different and are tetravalent atoms selected from the group consisting of carbon, silicon, germanium or tin, and R¹, R², R³, R⁴, R⁵ and R⁶ may be the same or different and are selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, alkyl groups, fluoroalkyl groups or alkyl groups substituted by other atoms or groups,

wherein at least one of  $R^1$ ,  $R^2$ ,  $R^3$ ,  $R^4$ ,  $R^5$  and  $R^6$  contains more than one carbon atom, and wherein one or more carbons may be replaced by an isoelectronic species, and n is in the range of 1 to 3.

Claim 28. (New) The composition of claim 27, wherein the groups  $R^1$  and  $R^4$  contain between two and eight carbons and may be the same or different.

Claim 29. (New) The composition of claim 28, wherein the groups  $R^2$ ,  $R^3$ ,  $R^5$  and  $R^6$  contain less than three carbons and may be the same or different.

Claim 30. (New) The composition of claim 27, wherein the E1 and E2 are selected from the group consisting of carbon and silicon and may be the same or different.

Claim 31. (New) The composition of claim 26, wherein the alkali metal is lithium.

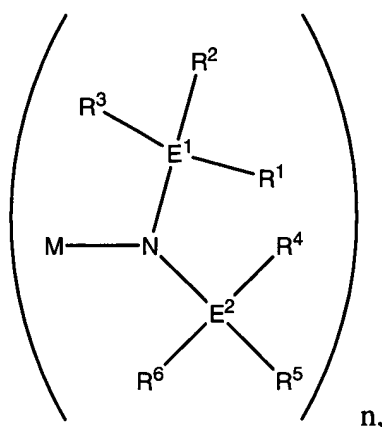
Claim 32. (New) The composition of claim 26, wherein the alkali metal is sodium.

Claim 33. (New) The composition of claim 26, wherein the alkali metal is potassium.

Claim 34. (New) The composition of claim 27, wherein n is in the range of 2 to 3.

Claim 35. (New) The composition of claim 26, wherein the liquid has a viscosity at 40°C in the range of about 200-1000 cP.

Claim 36. (New) A composition for use in the formation of alkali metal-containing materials comprising a liquid alkali metal amide, said amide being a liquid at a temperature in the range of about 20°C to about 70°C, and having the formula

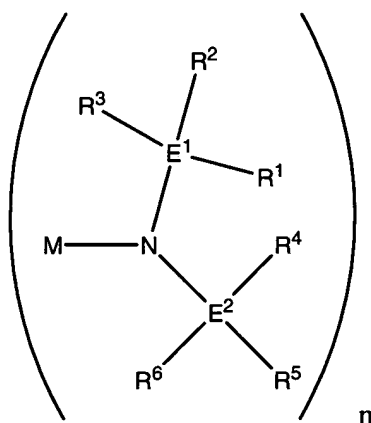


where M is an alkali metal; E<sup>1</sup> and E<sup>2</sup> may be the same or different and are tetravalent atoms selected from the group consisting of carbon, silicon, germanium or tin, and R<sup>1</sup>, R<sup>2</sup>, R<sup>3</sup>, R<sup>4</sup>, R<sup>5</sup> and R<sup>6</sup> may be the same or different and are selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, alkyl groups, fluoroalkyl groups or alkyl groups substituted by other atoms or groups, wherein at least one of R<sup>1</sup>, R<sup>2</sup>, R<sup>3</sup>, R<sup>4</sup>, R<sup>5</sup> and R<sup>6</sup> contains more than one carbon atom, and wherein one or more carbons may be replaced by an isoelectronic species, and n is in the range of 1 to 3,

and wherein the number of angular variables of the amide in excess of those present in the reference bis(trimethylsilyl)amine is greater than six.

Claim 37. (New) The composition of claim 36, wherein E<sup>1</sup>=E<sup>2</sup>=Si.

Claim 38. (New) A composition for use in the formation of alkali metal-containing materials comprising a liquid alkali metal amide, said amide being a liquid at a temperature in the range of about 20°C to about 70°C and having the formula



where M is an alkali metal; E<sup>1</sup> and E<sup>2</sup> may be the same or different and are tetravalent atoms selected from the group consisting of carbon, silicon, germanium or tin, and R<sup>1</sup>, R<sup>2</sup>, R<sup>3</sup>, R<sup>4</sup>, R<sup>5</sup> and R<sup>6</sup> may be the same or different and are selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, alkyl groups, fluoroalkyl groups or alkyl groups substituted by other atoms or groups, wherein at least one of R<sup>1</sup>, R<sup>2</sup>, R<sup>3</sup>, R<sup>4</sup>, R<sup>5</sup> and R<sup>6</sup> contains more than one carbon atom, and wherein one or more carbons may be replaced by an isoelectronic species, and n is in the range of 1 to 3,

with the proviso that when R<sup>1</sup> and/or R<sup>4</sup> are tert-butyl, then at least one of R<sup>2</sup>, R<sup>3</sup>, R<sup>5</sup> and R<sup>6</sup> is not methyl, and when R<sup>1</sup> and R<sup>4</sup> are ethyl, then R<sup>2</sup>, R<sup>3</sup>, R<sup>5</sup> and R<sup>6</sup> are not methyl or ethyl.

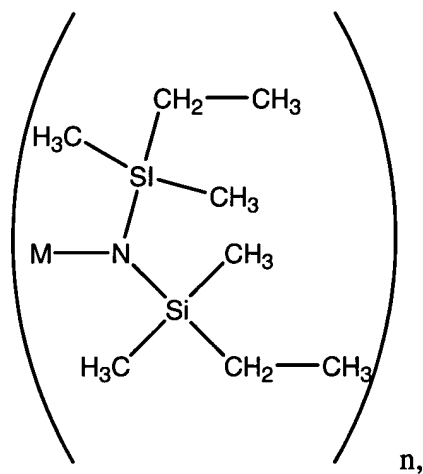
Claim 39. (New) A compound for use in the formation of alkali metal-containing materials comprising:

a liquid alkali metal amide compound, wherein the amide comprises an amine selected from the group consisting of bis(n-octyldimethylsilyl)amine, bis(n-hexyldimethylsilyl)amine, bis(n-butyldimethylsilyl)amine, bis(isobutyldimethylsilyl)amine, bis(n-propyldimethylsilyl)amine, tert-amyl(n-butyldimethylsilyl)amine, tert-amyl(iso-butyldimethylsilyl)amine, tert-amyl(n-propyldimethylsilyl)amine, tert-butyl(n-butyldimethylsilyl)amine, tert-

amyl(isopropyldimethylsilyl)amine, bis(ethyldimethylsilyl)amine, tert-amyl(ethyldimethylsilyl)amine, tert-butyl(n-propyldimethylsilyl)amine, tert-amyl(trimethylsilyl)amine, tert-butyl(ethyldimethylsilyl)amine, and tert-amyl-tert-butylamine.

Claim 40. (New) A compound for use in the formation of alkali metal-containing materials comprising:

a liquid alkali metal amide, said amide being a liquid at a temperature in the range of about 20°C to about 70°C and the formula,



wherein M is an alkali metal and n is in the range of 1 to 3.